

 The Council of Independent Colleges

PROGRAM FOR NEW PRESIDENTS

January 3–4, 2027 ▪ San Diego, California

PROGRAM FOR SPOUSES AND PARTNERS OF NEW PRESIDENTS

Practical Advice + Strategic Inspiration = Early Success

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A Message From the Director

Welcome to the CIC family! I am pleased to invite you to participate in the 2027 New Presidents Program on January 3–4 in San Diego, California. As you launch your presidency, I hope you will join this interactive, practical, network-building program, with its dynamic parallel program for new presidential spouses and partners.

The New Presidents Program immediately precedes CIC's 2027 Presidents Institute, which is by far the largest annual meeting of college and university presidents in the country. This year's Presidents Institute theme is *Human Horizons*. Presidents of independent colleges and universities from around the world and their spouses and partners will come together with other experts to reimagine the ways we champion human flourishing amidst the impersonal pressures of economic and technological change. I encourage you to make participating in both the New Presidents Program and Presidents Institute a priority of your early presidency.

Over the years, I have served as a faculty member and administrator at a public R1 university, as provost at a small independent university, and, until my recent retirement, as president of Franklin & Marshall College (PA), one of the oldest US liberal arts colleges. My years at F&M coincided with what we all recognize as a particularly turbulent time. We at CIC are keenly aware of how much the president's role has changed and how challenging it has become. Participating in CIC's New Presidents Program was immensely helpful to me in my first year, as I learned in the company of peers and experienced president-coaches. Now more than ever, presidents need information, new ideas, an understanding of best practices, moral support, and a network of trusted advisors and friends. Please join us! We will make it an excellent investment of your time.

Please contact me by email at baltmann@cic.edu or by phone at (541) 954-0633 with any questions you may have about the 2027 New Presidents Program.

I look forward to seeing you in January!



Barbara K. Altmann

CIC Senior Advisor and Director, New Presidents Program
and President Emerita, Franklin & Marshall College (PA)



"The New Presidents Program was the most impactful professional opportunity I have experienced since becoming a president. Hearing from other presidents wrestling with the same issues I encountered—and learning about their diverse approaches to addressing them—broadened my perspectives and allowed me to bring valuable insights to campus that have informed our decision-making processes and enhanced our strategies."

Matthew J. Draud

President, Briar Cliff University (IA)



"The New Presidents Program provided the candid counsel, practical insight, and peer connection that every new president needs, especially when leading through complexity and change. The program helped me think more strategically about governance, institutional culture, board relationships, and the early decisions that shape a presidency. I left with greater clarity, a stronger network of colleagues, and a deeper sense that while every presidency is unique, no president must navigate the work alone."

Shantay Bolton

President and CEO,
Columbia College Chicago (IL)

About the Program for New Presidents

Independent colleges and universities face unique challenges. While they lack the scale, visibility, and coordinated support of larger institutions, they must navigate the same complex leadership demands. That's why more than 1,700 new presidents have participated in CIC's New Presidents Program since its inception in 1989.

The goal is simple: provide new presidents the foundation they need to do the mission-driven student-centered work that defines independent higher education. Our agenda focuses on providing tools to help participants avoid early pitfalls and seize opportunities. Meanwhile, collaboration-focused approach also fosters chances for community-building with peers who understand the possibilities, challenges and constraints of leading an independent institution.

Participants point to these key benefits of attendance:

- Educational sessions that provide resources to lead with confidence and institute change
- Collaborative conversations to critically engage with colleagues while sharing perspectives and expertise
- Networking-building opportunities to forge friendships and create connections with peers



“The New Presidents Program was for me a personal investment with a real return. Beyond the tremendous learning opportunities from the program curriculum, building relationships with the network of presidents continues to provide authentic, real-time support that has been invaluable.”

Donald W. Comer
President, Lane College (TN)



“As someone in the first few months of a first presidency, this program was incredibly valuable, both for the just-in-time practical content we received as well as for the development of a cohort of peers who understood in a very direct way all the challenges I was facing. The sessions were fun and engaging, and the whole experience felt like a success booster. In just a few days, I made friends with other presidents who have become a great peer support group for me. I am also very glad to be part of the CIC network: in my first few months as a member, I have found the organization impressive, and I have taken advantage of every opportunity offered. I plan to deepen my CIC connection.”

Jeannine Diddle Uzzi
President, Thomas College (ME)



Session Topics

New Presidents

For presenters and other details, visit cic.edu/2027npp

Day 1: Fundamentals

- Making Connections
- Financial Foundations
- Revenue Generation
- Communications and Media Relations
- Operating Efficiency
- Deeper Dive Breakouts

Day 2: Relationships

- Working with Your Board
- Managing Your Senior Leadership Team
- President as Chief Advocate
- You Got the Job, Now What?

Spouses and Partners of New Presidents

For presenters and other details, visit cic.edu/2027spnpp

Day 1: Deepening Identity, Purpose and Connection

- Making Connections
- The Role Beside the Role
- Circles of Influence
- Defining Your Role Identity
- Navigating Your Public Presence
- Presidents Panel
- I Wish I Had Known What I Know Now

Day 2: Planning and Wellbeing

- Navigating Change with Resiliency
- Making the Role Work for You: Planning for Success
- Strategies for Wellbeing

About the Program for Spouses and Partners of New Presidents

CIC's Spouses and Partners of New Presidents Program runs alongside the New Presidents Program just before the Presidents Institute.

This special experience is designed to help participants:

- Deepen their understanding of the presidential spouse or partner role
- Explore strategies for authentic influence and community connection
- Share insights and build a peer network of support and collaboration

This special program for spouses and partners of new presidents offers a warm, supportive, and confidential space to explore both the joys and challenges of this unique journey. Guided by a small team of experienced presidential spouses, participants engage in thoughtful conversations and activities that illuminate how to serve with confidence, grace, and authenticity.

Participants are warmly encouraged to also join the Spouses and Partners Program activities during the Presidents Institute (January 4–7). This complementary program expands the conversation to a wider range of topics—many focused on practical strategies for thriving in campus and community life.



“Being a new presidential spouse is learning to play a role for which you didn’t audition. This is what makes the CIC program so helpful. You realize that you’re not alone and others are trying to figure it out, too. Supported by some wise and experienced guides, you also discover that not only can you do this, but there are a lot of different ways in which it can be done. I learned so much from this program and I recommend it highly.”

Travis Tamerius
Presidential Spouse,
Meredith College (NC)



“I was grateful that CIC offered a program unique to spouses. We were able to meet a cohort of new spouses and learned from long serving spouses. There were various sessions offered and one in particular focused on the importance of building community with various constituents. This spring I was able to apply what I learned at CIC to organize a board partner program that ran parallel to the May board meeting which was well received. I look forward to learning and engaging more next year!”

Elizabeth Brady
Presidential Spouse, Wittenberg
University (OH)



We've Saved You a Spot ... Registration and Hotel Information

CIC's New Presidents Program will be held just prior to CIC's Presidents Institute in San Diego, California.

- **Dates:** January 3–4, 2027 (leading into CIC's January 4–7 Presidents Institute)
- **Registration opens:** August 5, 2026
- **Registration deadline:** December 1, 2026
- **Location:** Hilton San Diego Bayfront
- **Registration fee:** \$500 for presidents, \$385 for spouses and partners (includes all meals and session materials)

Please note: First register for the Presidents Institute and sign up for the New Presidents Program as a session. An email will then be sent to the person who completed the registration that will include hotel reservation details and a code to make a room reservation at the CIC discounted rate.



To register, and for additional information about the hotel, travel arrangements, and the Presidents Institute program, please visit the CIC website. For staff assistance, please contact CIC's conference coordinator at ccoordinator@cic.edu.